

Gifted for Generosity

By Rev. Benjamin Yu

Ephesians 4:28

- Introduction
 - Is the church dying?
 - Matthew 16:16, *"I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."*
 - Christianity is growing with 2.6 billion followers making it the largest systematic organization in the world
 - Center for Study of Global Christianity at Gordon Conwell Seminary
- Robbers
 - A young man robbed a bank wearing a suit made of many mirrors. But he turned himself in after taking some time to_____. Luckily the judge was lenient as he saw a lot of himself in the young man.
 - Have you heard of the robbery at the donut store? I heard that the robbers left with _____glazing
 - What happens when you see a robbery at the Apple Store? You become an _____.
 - What did the robber say when when he ran out of gas and tried to rob the Louvre in Paris? Give me your _____so that I can make the Van Gogh.
 - A Cal Trans worker was accused of robbery. He denied it. But when the police arrived at his home, all the _____were there.
 - Ephesians 4:28, *"Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need."*
- Gifted by Grace
 - Ephesians 2:8, *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- 9 not by works, so that no-one can boast. 10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."*
 - Ephesians 4:7, *"But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. 8 This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men."*
 - Ephesians 4:13, *"until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."*

- Gifted to Live a New Life
 - 2 Corinthians 5:17, *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"*
 - Ephesians 4:22, *"You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. 25 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. 26 "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27 and do not give the devil a foothold. 28 He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need."*
 - 2 Corinthians 9:7, *"Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work" How do we allow this gift of grace to blossom and grow?*

- Renewing Your Mind
 - Proverbs 23:7, *"As a man thinks in his heart, so is he"*
 - Ephesians 4:17 *"So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. 18 They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts."*

- The Mind of Christ
 - 2 Corinthians 2:16, *"For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.*
 - WWJD - WWJT - What Would Jesus Think?
 - Studying and knowing the Word of God
 - John 1:1, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."*
 - Hebrews 4:12, *"For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. 13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account."*
 - "You shall not steal." That is a fundamental precept for every person.
 - Health and Wealth Gospel

- Christians give in order to gain material compensation from God. If I give to God, God will give back to you double, or 10 fold or 100 fold. You have to keep giving, and then you may hit the jackpot. God becomes some Vegas slot machine.
 - Faith is a self-generated force that leads to prosperity. You are not rich because you don't have enough faith. So, the call is to give more, out of "faith."
 - Prayer is a tool to force or coerce God to grant you prosperity. Prayer is weaponized for your personal benefit and wealth. You name it, and claim it.
- Put Christ Front and Center
- Acts 20:35, *"It is more blessed to give than receive."*
- Luke 6:38, *"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."*
- Matthew 25:35, *"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.*
- Ephesians 1:4 *"For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love 5 he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace 8 that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding."*